THE GREEK PLAY

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AN ACCOUNT

OF THE

HARVARD GREEK PLAY.

BY

HENRY NORMAN.

To have seen a Grecian play is a great remembrance.

DE QUINCEY.

BOSTON:
JAMES R. OSGOOD AND COMPANY.
1882.

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By Henry Norman.

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TO

PROFESSOR JOHN WILLIAMS WHITE,

παρθένου φίλας φίλῳ,

THIS VOLUME

IS GRATEFULLY DEDICATED.

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Note.

THE performance of the Oedipus Tyrannus of Sophocles in the Theatre of Harvard University in May, 1881, was a memorable event in our quiet academic life. After months of preparation and anxious thought, it took us all by surprise. We had hoped to have a dignified academic performance, which should give classical scholars a vivid impression of one of those tragedies "of stateliest argument," whose full power is beyond the reach of the mere student, which might revive pleasant recollections in some whose Greek was chiefly a memory of the past, and which might perhaps also interest a few others, who would regard an ancient tragedy, like any other ancient curiosity, with kind and charitable consideration. None were more surprised at the almost universal enthusiasm which the actual performance excited — none, indeed, were more surprised at the effect of the performance upon themselves —

than those of us who should have understood best the power and grandeur of a tragedy of Sophocles. This was due in no small measure to the scrupulous fidelity with which every one who took part in the performance devoted his best strength to its success; but it was due also, and more than to all else, to the native power of Attic tragedy, which suddenly revealed itself, even to those who were ignorant of its form and its language alike, as a veritable "possession for all time."

It is eminently proper that the first performance of a Greek tragedy in America should be commemorated in some permanent record; and all who were interested in our play will be glad to know that this volume has been prepared for that purpose by one whose intimate relations to the play give him a special right to be its chronicler.

W. W. GOODWIN.

HARVARD UNIVERSITY,
December, 1881.

Introduction.

SUDDENLY, in December last, an opportunity dawned — a golden opportunity, gleaming for a moment amongst thick clouds of impossibility that had gathered through three-and-twenty centuries — for seeing a Grecian tragedy presented on a British stage, and with the nearest approach possible to the beauty of those Athenian pomps which Sophocles, which Phidias, which Pericles, created, beautified, promoted." These were the words of De Quincey more than thirty years ago. The opportunity was eagerly embraced, the tragedy witnessed with delight, and De Quincey

concludes his essay of forty pages with the assurance that "it was cheap at the price of a journey to Siberia, and is the next best thing to having seen Waterloo at sunset on the 18th of June, 1815," and condenses his deliberate judgment in the words which serve as a motto for the present volume. Such unstinted praise awarded to an insignificant representation of the Antigone in English may serve as an apology, if one be needed, for these pages. The play of which they give an account is the masterpiece of classic tragedy; it was produced under the auspices and within the precincts of a great university; each detail of the presentation was in the charge of men known for exact scholarship and literary taste; difficulty and expense were alike disregarded in the effort to give an impressive reproduction of an Athenian performance; seven months were spent in preparation. The play was witnessed by six thousand people; on the occasion of the

first performance, by an audience which, for literary distinction, has probably never been equalled in America; many persons were unable to obtain seats, although ten times the original price was freely offered; it was reported by every considerable newspaper in the country,* and the news of its performance was not only telegraphed to Europe, but was even inserted in the local papers there, so that — owing to the difference of time — while the strains of the first choral ode were ringing through the Sanders Theatre, a Harvard man who was studying in Bonn overheard a group of German students discussing it over the *Biertisch.* These facts seem to call for some permanent record and description: it would be unfitting that an event at once so unique in its character and productive of such wide-spread interest should receive no other memorial than a niche in the limbo of pleasant memories.

* See Appendix 3.

In the statements concerning Athenian art and literature which are necessary to the comprehension of the Harvard Greek play, the writer presents no claim to originality. To the committee which had charge of the play, to whose learning and exertions its success was chiefly due, he desires to acknowledge his indebtedness and to express his thanks.

In addition to their interest as portraits of the principal characters, the illustrations have been selected to exhibit the typical costumes, attitudes, and incidents of the play. Their number being limited, it was necessary to omit several portraits which might naturally be expected. The groups and portraits are reproductions, by the Heliotype Printing Company, from negatives taken with great success by Mr. James Notman, of Boston, except the portrait of Jocasta (Mr. Opdycke), which is by Pach. The groups were photographed on the stage of the Sanders Theatre with the electric light; they are, therefore,

representations of the actual scenes of the play. In comparison with the portraits, which were taken in sunlight, they will appear dark and somewhat indistinct; it must be borne in mind that photographing with the electric light is attended with many difficulties which are not present in the ordinary process. These groups of the Greek play, of which eight are reproduced here, are believed to constitute the most extensive piece of photography of this kind which has yet been attempted, and reflect great credit upon Mr. Notman.

The illustrations in the text have been drawn, and in several instances designed also, by Mr. C. H. Moore, Instructor in Drawing in Harvard University. The engraving is by Closson.

I.

THE presentation of a Greek tragedy was no new idea at Harvard University. In 1876 the Memorial Hall was completed by the erection of the Sanders Theatre, and Professor Goodwin wished to mark the occasion by the performance of the Antigone of Sophocles in the original Greek. After a favorable reception and some discussion the plan was abandoned because of its many difficulties. The idea of a Harvard Greek play was then allowed to lie in abeyance, with an occasional allusion by some enthusiastic person, until the summer of 1880. In the mean time the Agamemnon of Aeschylus had been performed with signal success by Oxford students, and had met with the

warmest reception in London. Many accounts of the Oxford play and its success had come across the ocean and had aroused the dormant desire to produce a similar play at Harvard. Some of the English newspapers have alluded slightingly to the Harvard play as another instance of the "manner in which America follows everything that is initiated in England." This is unjust, as the idea had been entertained here long before the Agamemnon was thought of at Oxford. On the other hand, the assertion in this country that the Oedipus at Harvard was an entirely spontaneous and independent movement, is equally untrue. We are indebted to England for the immediate inspiration and suggestion of the undertaking; had there been no Agamemnon at Oxford there would have been no Oedipus at Harvard.

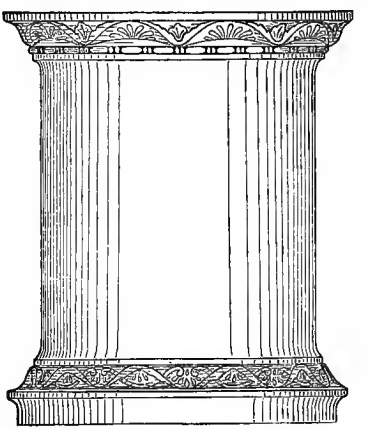
The awakened plan took shape at the meetings of an informal philological club,

which numbered among its members several Harvard professors. A Harvard Greek play, — why not? This is not a country where ideas go a-begging, so the proposal was no sooner made than it found many warm supporters; a few hearty discussions put it into a practical shape and removed such obstacles as had presented themselves, and the opening of the autumn term found it a definite and attractive scheme. A committee was formed, the various divisions of the work to be done were assigned to those most competent to take charge of them, and conferences were held with the students who would probably be invited to take part in the performance.

With little discussion it was decided to attempt the Oedipus Tyrannus of Sophocles. This play was chosen, first, as the masterpiece of the classic stage, and as being typical of so many elements of Greek thought; and secondly, because of the significance of its plot to a modern mind, and the adap-

tability of its scenic details to modern and local conditions.

The distribution of the rôles followed immediately the selection of the play; the chosen few bent themselves to their long task, and before the autumn term of 1880 was a month old, regular work on the Greek play had been begun.



II.

LESS than a mile and a half from Athens stood the hill of Colonus. Its beauties have been sung by its own poet.

O stranger, thou hast reached the dwellings of a land
Where noble steeds are bred, — earth has no better homes —
Colonus, with a gleaming altar crowned. Here, too,
The clear-toned nightingale pours forth her plaintive note
Down in green glades where purple ivy grows,
The ivy which she loves, and where the thicket grows
Sunless, untrodden, shaken by no winds, a fruit
Of myriad berries bearing, sacred to the God.
There joyous Dionysus wanders ever
In happy frolic with the Nymphs who care for him ;
And nourished by the falling dews of heaven each day
The clustering narcissus blooms, the ancient crown
Of mighty Goddesses ; and there its golden head
The crocus shows. The sleepless rills which flow
To feed Cephissus' streams are never dry, but with
Each day their quickening waters o'er earth's bosom flow.
The chorus of the Muses does not shun the spot,
And Aphrodite with her golden reins is there.

It is no wonder that the dwellers in this favored place were proud to call themselves Coloniatae, as well as Athenians. And another distinction was added to Colonus, which was destined to outlast all the rest; a voice which should ring out for ages after the sacred groves had changed to "cold, bare, ruin'd choirs"; a power which should live on "to better and convert mankind" when Dionysus had become a dream and Athena but a vision. It was the birthplace of Sophocles.

Never has any people reached such a height of intellectual power, and left such a legacy of influences that will be possessions forever, as did the Greeks in the age of Pericles. To guard against the suspicion of ungrounded enthusiasm, it may be well to recall the words of a careful scientific investigator of men. Mr. Francis Galton, in his work on "Hereditary Genius," at the close of a discussion to establish the proposition

that "the ablest race of whom history bears record is unquestionably the ancient Greek," makes the following astonishing statement: "It follows from all this that the average ability of the Athenian race is, on the lowest possible estimate, very nearly two grades higher than our own, — that is, about as much as our race is above the African negro."

At this time the shadow of Eastern supremacy had been dissipated and "the great King" was no longer spoken of with terror. Marathon, Thermopylae, and Salamis, names of immortal memory, were in the immediate past; Greek courage, one may almost say Athenian courage, had scattered the hosts of Persia; a struggle on which the welfare of mankind depended had been won for the cause of freedom and civilization; "to the triumph of the Greeks," says Mr. Symonds, "we owe whatever is most great and glorious in the subsequent achievements of

PLATE I.

the human race." Free from fear and fighting, Greece turned at once to the development of its own powers: of all the cities of Greece, Athens was the one which had done most for its liberation, and was the first to take advantage of what had been so bravely won. "She who saved me," was added to the attributes of Athena. In a few years Athens reached that height which has been at once the inspiration and the despair of all succeeding civilization. The undying names of Greece gather around Athens at this moment: Themistocles, Aristides, Pericles; Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides; Herodotus and Thucydides; Phidias, — all these may be considered contemporaneous.

Although to write an account of the life of Sophocles has been compared to the task of making bricks without straw, enough is known about him to have justified the most remarkable eulogies. The facts of his life are briefly as follows: He was born at Colonus

in 495 B. C., received a complete and typical education, and was famous as a youth for his remarkable beauty. On his first appearance as a tragic poet, in 468 B. C., at the festival commemorating the return of the bones of the Athenian hero Theseus, he defeated his great predecessor Aeschylus. During sixty years he wrote busily, composing a hundred and thirteen plays, only seven of which, with some fragments, have been preserved. Although so few in number, it is probable that the dramas which still exist are among the best he wrote; and representing, as they do, both the genius of Sophocles and the spirit of his age, they are among the most valuable literary possessions of mankind. His life embraced the whole field of human activity; nothing which could teach or strengthen a man seems to have been lacking in his experience. Auspicious in its opening, glorious in its course, his career was crowned with the blessing which the

Greeks regarded as most precious, — death came before any misfortune had disfigured him. He died in 405 B. C., thus being spared by one year the sight of the subjection of his native city and the beginnings of the downfall of his country. This fact is brought prominently forward in the epitaph written by Phrynichus, — *καλῶς ἐτελεύτησ' οὐδὲν ὑπομείνας κακόν.*

> "Thrice-happy Sophocles! in good old age,
> Blessed as a man and as a craftsman blessed,
> He died: his many tragedies were fair,
> And fair his end, nor knew he any sorrow." *

Time and place appear to have found their happiest combination in the creation of Sophocles; this fact has impressed itself upon almost every writer who has treated of him. Schlegel says: "It seems that a beneficent Providence wished in this individual to evince to the human race the dignity and blessedness of its lot, by endowing him with every divine gift, with all that can adorn and

* Symonds's translation.

elevate the mind and the heart, and crowning him with every imaginable blessing in this life." Mr. Symonds writes: "We cannot but think of him as specially created to represent Greek art in its most exquisitely balanced perfection. It is impossible to imagine a more plastic nature, a genius more adapted to its special function, more fittingly provided with all things needful to its full development, born at a happier moment in the history of the world, and more nobly endowed with physical qualities suited to its intellectual capacities." And again: "We have every right to accept his tragedy as the purest mirror of the Athenian mind at its most brilliant period." With regard to this latter point, — the most important in the present connection, — no judgment can be of more weight than that of Curtius, and he gives forth no uncertain note. "The art of Sophocles was a glorified exponent of the spirit of Periclean Athens."

It would be easy to multiply these quotations. One more must be given, both on account of its poetical beauty and of the position of its author. Matthew Arnold replies to a friend,

> "Who prop, thou ask'st, in these bad days, my mind?"

In an age when the material aspects of life crowd out the spiritual, when art is either a memory or a hope, whom does this man of culture find to guide and refresh him, to prop his soul? His answer is: The blind old Homer much; much the halting slave Epictetus;

> "But be his
> My special thanks, whose even-balanced soul,
> From first youth tested up to extreme old age,
> Business could not make dull, nor passion wild;
> Who saw life steadily, and saw it whole;
> The mellow glory of the Attic stage,
> Singer of sweet Colonus, and its child."

So, of the hosts of prophets and preachers, of singers and workers, the one to whom this

man of trained mind and pure spirit looks "in these bad days" is Sophocles.

After what has been said of the genius and representative character of Sophocles, nothing need be added to show the wisdom of selecting his composition for performance at Harvard.

III.

BEFORE any account of the play itself can be given, some of the characteristics of Greek tragedy in general must be briefly stated. The most prominent of these is a fundamental religious character. In this respect a Greek tragedy may be compared to the passion-plays of the Middle Ages. The legend upon which it was based was as familiar to the Greek spectator as the story of the Passion is to a modern churchman. Many of the legends were derived from Homer, whose poems formed the bible of the Greeks. This would suffice to lend a solemn interest to the representation of them; and when we consider the additional facts that the tragic drama was filled with the expression of feel-

ings of intense patriotism, and that it was the embodiment of the loftiest moral conceptions of the age, the sacred character of the performances becomes clear. In the tragedies of Aeschylus the nobility of mankind is pictured in the Gods; Sophocles struck the key-note of subsequent Greek sentiment by exhibiting the supreme characteristics of mankind in men themselves. This prompted the saying that Euripides portrays men as they are, Sophocles, as they ought to be. He stood midway between the theologic vastness of Aeschylus and the commonplaceness — using the word in no bad sense — of Euripides. Hence his ethical strength and the immortal inspiration of his verse, — *παντὶ μέσῳ τὸ κράτος θεὸς ὤπασεν.*

When these masterpieces of tragedy were produced there were few readers in Athens, but many hearers. The costs of the performance were divided between the state and some wealthy and aspiring citizen. There

was a "theoric fund" from which the entrance-fee was supplied to poor citizens. The great Dionysiac festival, celebrated once a year, was the occasion of the performance; thirty thousand people, citizens, — men and women, — priests, strangers, and ambassadors, formed an audience from whose size the significance of the event may be understood. The highest honors were bestowed upon the successful dramatist, and all the attendant circumstances united with the greatness of the plays themselves to render the performance an occasion of intense interest.

The Sanders Theatre at Cambridge somewhat resembles the classic theatre in shape. The stage is long and narrow, open at the sides and top; while the seats form a series of concentric semicircles, one above another. Although the building does not compare in size or dignity with the Greek theatre, it is equally removed from the ugly outlines and tawdry decorations of the modern playhouse.

There is no place in this country in which a Greek tragedy could be performed with less apparent anachronism.

The theatre of Dionysus at Athens was built upon the southern slope of the hill of the Acropolis, and was entirely open to the sky, an arrangement natural in such a fair and regular climate as that of Greece. The plays were performed in broad daylight, and this open-air reality added great force to the scenes. Many features of the famous Attic landscape were in sight, and the actor could make them the subjects of telling gesture. The noble farewell of Ajax illustrates the opportunities of this kind.

> "And thee I call, thou light of golden day,
> Thou Sun, who drivest on thy glorious car,
> Thee, for this last time, never more again,
> O Light, O sacred land that was my home;
> O Salamis, where stands my father's hearth,
> Thou glorious Athens, with thy kindred race;
> Ye streams and rivers here, and Troïa's plains,
> To you that fed my life I bid farewell;
> This last, last word does Ajax speak to you;
> All else I speak in Hades to the dead."

A speech like this, full of allusions to familiar and beloved places, delivered with gestures suggesting the position of each, and concluding with the death of the speaker, must have produced a profound impression.

The spectators frequently numbered twenty-five thousand, sitting on semicircular tiers of stone seats, built one above another. Front seats were reserved for priests, magistrates, and distinguished strangers. The space corresponding to the modern pit was left open, and in the middle stood the altar, or θυμέλη, around which the Chorus performed its sacred dance and sung the choral odes. The stage was long and narrow, the back representing in most cases a palace, which was constructed, not merely painted. The actors wore masks with strongly defined features indicating the characters they were playing. These masks were necessary to render the face visible at a great distance; they expressed the nobility of Gods and heroes, and made it

possible for one actor to play several parts. It is probable that the masks contained appliances to increase the volume of the voice. Very thick-soled shoes were worn to give heroic stature, and every article of dress was so adjusted as to add to the appearance of strength and dignity. The female parts were played by men. It is important to remember that the stage right, that is, the entrance to the left of the spectators, was supposed to lead to foreign parts; the stage left, to the city, or the home of the person concerned.

The most striking and original feature of the Greek drama is the Chorus. As employed by Sophocles this consists of fifteen persons, their character varying with the circumstances of the play, but generally corresponding to the leading part. Thus in the Oedipus the Chorus is composed of Theban elders. The function of the Chorus is that of a commentary on the play: the

action of a play is given by the actors; the reflection of a play is given by the Chorus. They pour forth thanksgiving or supplications to the Gods; through their leader, the Coryphaeus, they address the personages of the tragedy to calm impetuosity or to give courage; they utter philosophic odes suggested by the virtues or vices, the success or misfortune, of the characters. All these functions are beautifully exhibited in the Oedipus.

Οἰδίπους Τύραννος, variously translated "Oedipus Tyrannus," "Oedipus Rex," and "Oedipus the King," is generally considered the masterpiece of classic tragedy; it exhibits, says Professor Lewis Campbell, "the perfect development of the various elements of Greek tragic art." Aristotle numbers it among αἱ κάλλισται τραγῳδίαι, and indeed he may be said to regard it as the type of a perfect play, since he supports most of his views on tragedy by

quotations from it. The universality of its portrayal of men and morals — in a word, its supremely human character — has caused it to be imitated and translated many times. Beside many classic imitations, Corneille, Voltaire, La Motte, and Dryden have each written his Oedipus, and a modern French translation has just been produced at the Théâtre Français. Perhaps the most surprising feature of the performance at Harvard was the impression left upon the spectators. Although the majority of them were unable to follow the Greek, and were not entirely familiar with the Greek point of view, still the characters appealed to them so strongly, and the ethical situation was so overwhelming, that they listened with bated breath and separated in silence. The old Greek spirit of the tragedy took so deep a hold upon the more thoughtful portion of the audience that even now, several months afterwards, an allusion to the play is suffi-

cient to cause a change in the tone of the conversation.

In the northern part of Boeotia stood the ever-famous city of Thebes. Of all Greek cities it was richest in its legendary past, and its greatness was not diminished in historic times. It was the birthplace of Dionysus and Hercules, the seven-gated city *οὗ δὴ μόνον τίκτουσιν αἱ θνηταὶ θεούς*; within its streets the strains of Amphionic music were first heard; its varying fortunes furnished themes to all the poets. There, in mythical, heroic times, the scene of the Oedipus is laid. Many years before the period upon which the play opens, Laius had been king of Thebes. He had taken for his wife Jocasta, the daughter of Menoeceus, but no children had been born to them, — in Greek eyes a sure sign of the displeasure of the Gods. In order to receive counsel and aid, or to escape punishment, there was in those

days but one thing to be done, and Laius in his sorrow followed the usual pious custom. He betook himself to the powerful shrine of Apollo at Delphi, praying the God to grant that the race of the Labdacidae might not perish. His prayer was granted, but with a fearful addition. This is the answer of the oracle as versified by a late writer: —

"Laios, Labdacos' son, thou askest for birth of fair offspring;
Lo! I will give thee a son, but know that Destiny orders
That thou by the boy's hand must die, for so to the curses of Pelops,
Whom of his son thou hast robbed, Zeus, son of Kronos, hath granted,
And he, in his trouble of heart, called all this sorrow upon thee." *

Accordingly a son was born to the unhappy pair; but Laius, thinking to escape the terrible doom, ordered his wife Jocasta to cause it to be left to perish in the mountains. By the mother's directions the ankles of the child were pierced and tied together with a thong,

* Plumptre's translation.

and it was given to a shepherd to be hung up to die on a tree in the most desolate part of Mount Cithaeron. The additional cruelty of boring the child's ankles was to make its death doubly sure, since even if some tender-hearted traveller should chance upon the hiding-place, he would be unlikely, as a Greek, to rescue and rear a cripple. The shepherd, however, took the dangerous course of disobeying the royal command, and gave the babe to a Corinthian herdsman with whom he was accustomed to share the pasture. This man carried the boy to Polybus and Merope, the king and queen of Corinth, who, being childless, reared it as their own son. The only trace of his mother's cruelty remained in the swollen feet, and from this peculiarity the name Οἰδίπους — "swell-foot" — was given to him. The boy thus born under a curse, thus cruelly condemned, and thus miraculously saved, — a veritable παῖς τυχῆς, as he afterwards called himself, — is

the famous Oedipus of Theban legend and the hero of the Sophoclean tragedy.

Oedipus grew to manhood at the court of Corinth, never doubting that he was the true son of Polybus and Merope, until one day a drunken comrade taunted him with the uncertainty of his birth. Early on the morrow Oedipus besought his supposed parents to deny this uncertainty and to prove him their son. A vague answer and the punishment of the babbler did not satisfy him, and, being unable to learn the truth at home, he too journeyed to the Delphian Apollo. The answer to the father had been terrible, but the curse lived, and the answer to the son was more terrible still. Many years later Oedipus gave this account of what the oracle told him: —

"The God
Sent me forth shamed, unanswered in my quest;
And other things he spake, dread, dire, and dark,
That I should join in wedlock with my mother,
Beget a brood that men should loathe to look at,
Be murderer of the father that begot me."

Overwhelmed by this most frightful fate, Oedipus determined never to return to Corinth nor to see Polybus and Merope again, thus imitating his father's attempt to prove the God a liar, — and with as much success. Quitting Delphi he chose a road of which he knew nothing except that it led away from Corinth. Following it, he came to a spot where three ways met, the road leading from Delphi branching towards Boeotia and towards Daulia. This spot, where the ills of Oedipus began, became famous under the name of ἡ σχιστὴ ὁδὸς, — the Divided Way; in the second century A. D. the traveller Pausanias saw the heaps of stones supposed to cover the bodies of the men whom Oedipus slew. There in the narrow pass Oedipus met an old man travelling in a chariot drawn by colts. It was Laius, once more on his way to Delphi; thus father and son strangely met. The attendant leading the animals shouldered the dusty wayfarer from the path. Oedipus

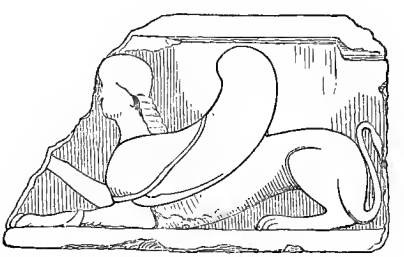
turned in anger and struck him. The old man watched his opportunity, and with his goad dealt Oedipus a blow on the head. The anger of Oedipus then became uncontrollable, — κτείνω δὲ τοὺς ξύμπαντας, he says when describing the occurrence; "I slew them every one." Following the road he had blindly chosen, he came to the vicinity of Thebes, where a still more surprising adventure awaited him. On the lofty highway leading to the city, the Sphinx, a monster with the face of a woman, the wings of a bird, and the tail and claws of a lion, had stationed herself; she seized every one who passed, and demanded the solution of an enigma. Those who failed to find it — and no one had succeeded — were hurled from the rock where she dwelt. In Oedipus she met her match; the riddle was no sooner propounded than it was solved, and the Sphinx cast herself down and perished among her victims. Arriving at Thebes, Oedipus

found it in a state of the greatest excitement and terror. The ravages of the monster had threatened to devastate the city, and in desperation Creon, the successor of Laius as king of Thebes, had offered his crown and the hand of his widowed sister Jocasta to any one who should destroy the Sphinx. Ignorant alike of the peril and the promise, Oedipus had accomplished this; he was consequently hailed as saviour by the grateful Thebans and received the double reward. Then came years of joy and prosperity; four children were born to the unsuspecting king; honored as a heaven-sent ruler, and happy as a husband and father, it is not surprising that he forgot the days of fearful oracles and aimless wanderings. But the greater the fancied security the more dreadful the awakening to bitter reality; and the awakening soon came. A plague fell upon the famous city, the crops were blighted and the children were perishing. This was the beginning of

the end, and with it the tragedy of Oedipus the King opens.

An account of the movement of the play will be necessarily interwoven with the description of the performance. The preceding remarks and detailed narrative are designed to suggest to the reader the point of view of a Greek spectator, and therefore to aid in the appreciation of this wonderful play. Wonderful, for it exhibits an unparalleled union of artistic accuracy and moral power.

> "So write a book shall mean, beyond the facts,
> Suffice the eye, and save the soul beside."



IV.

WE must now return from Thebes to Cambridge, and resume the narrative at the point where it was left at the close of the Introduction.

As soon as a decision was reached, the professors of the Greek department of the University undertook the work of arrangement and direction. To describe the services of each of these gentlemen would be to introduce matter of too personal a nature; it must suffice to place their names upon record as those of the persons to whom the success of the play was mainly due. Professor W. W. Goodwin, Professor J. W. White, and Professor Louis Dyer were untiring in their labors, and Professor Charles Eliot Norton lent encouragement and suggestion.

From the first the necessity of original music for the play had been evident, and the work of composing it was undertaken by Professor J. K. Paine. The task of writing music to the choruses of Sophocles — music which should preserve the original metres and embody the Greek sentiment expressed in them — was a very hard one. Little is known about the music of the Greeks; it is not probable, however, that a race which exhibited the ultimate application of the principles of several of the arts would remain contented with a barbaric music. In this modern performance two courses were open: the one, an attempt to discover the limitations of the Greek knowledge of music, and to compose, within those limitations, an adequate representation of the simpler emotions of the play; the other, to disregard the historical method, and to apply all the wealth of modern harmony and instrumentation to the expression, to a mod-

ern mind, of the varied and profound emotions which the Oedipus would rouse in a Greek breast. By the former course, the metrical structure of the choral odes would have been preserved, and consequently an imitation of the Greek orchestic movements would have been possible; these advantages would have been offset by the dulness and monotony of the music. By the latter course, while strict classical accuracy would be lost, there would be the great advantage of an additional sympathetic presentation of the great sentiments of the tragedy. Of these two courses Professor Paine chose the latter; and although there is undoubtedly room for regret that owing to the intricacy of modern musical composition the metres were obscured and the sacred dances so simplified as to be unrecognizable, still the music ranked so high as a work of modern art, and added so greatly to the comprehension of the situations and therefore to the

profit of the audiences, that the final verdict must be one of satisfaction and gratitude. Professor Paine's work has been received with unqualified approval: the critic of the "Nation" ventured to prophesy that it will be "interesting to future generations as one of the landmarks in the history of musical art."

After the organization of the Harvard managers, the details were arranged with great rapidity. The play was finally cast as follows *: —

Oedipus	Mr. George Riddle.
The Priest of Zeus . . .	Mr. W. H. Manning.
Creon	Mr. Henry Norman.
Teiresias	Mr. Curtis Guild.
Jocasta	Mr. L. E. Opdycke.
First Messenger	Mr. A. W. Roberts.
The Shepherd of Laius . . .	Mr. G. M. Lane.
Second Messenger . . .	Mr. Owen Wister.

* According to classic custom the characters are placed in the order in which they speak.

The rôle of Creon was originally assigned to Mr. J. R. Howe; he was compelled by a severe illness to relinquish it.

The dramatic chorus was composed of members of the Harvard Glee Club, as follows: —

First Tenors:	Mr. L. B. McCagg, Coryphaeus.
	Mr. N. M. Brigham.
	Mr. P. J. Eaton.
	Mr. Howard Lilienthal.
Second Tenors:	Mr. W. P. Davis.
	Mr. J. S. How.
	Mr. Gustavus Tuckerman.
First Basses:	Mr. F. R. Burton.
	Mr. H. G. Chapin.
	Mr. M. H. Cushing.
	Mr. C. S. Hamlin.
Second Basses:	Mr. Sumner Coolidge.
	Mr. Morris Earle.
	Mr. C. F. Mason.
	Mr. E. P. Mason.

Rehearsals commenced immediately after these selections were made. Mr. George

Riddle was Instructor in Elocution in Harvard University, and under his direction the actors began the study of their parts. The beginning was made by learning the accurate pronunciation and accentuation of the lines, and in this each man was carefully trained by the professors. The lines were then committed to memory, a scene at a time. Each scene was put in rehearsal as soon as it was committed. The men received minute instruction with regard to voice, gesture, position, entrances and exits, and all the usual technicalities of the stage. It was not long before every man knew his lines and was fairly familiar with the other details of his part.

The progress of the work was marked by various steps in its development. First, the rehearsals were transferred from the hall where elocution is studied to the stage of the Sanders Theatre. This seemed at the time an alarming advance. Then came

the first rehearsal of actors and Chorus together. It was a memorable day when the costumes arrived, and the scene at the opening of the trunks was one not to be forgotten. There were vivid exclamations of delight from some favored man who found himself in possession of a crimson and gold-embroidered robe; then a shout of laughter as one of the *mutae personae* (*anglice*, supernumeraries) was discovered contemplating with rueful visage a tunic apparently only a few inches long; there was the comical appearance of some man trying on his πέτασος, and the council of war over several pieces of stuff measuring five feet by twelve, — were they curtains, or ἱμάτια? Then some one discovered the sandals of Jocasta, delicately wrapped in tissue-paper, and much masculine wit was expended upon them.

These costumes were prepared under the supervision of Mr. F. D. Millet, who had

made a prolonged study of costume from the historical and artistic points of view. Each dress was the subject of detailed consideration, with regard to historical accuracy, the figure of the wearer, the appropriateness to the station he was supposed to occupy, and even the color-composition of the scenes in which he took part. The performance was consequently a spectacle of the highest order. During the last month of preparation Mr. Millet was present at many of the rehearsals, and was indefatigable in his efforts to make each man appreciate the character and capabilities of his costume. In an excellent account of the costumes of the play* he gives great credit to the actors. "The experience of the Harvard students proved how easy it is to master the use of this apparently complicated and troublesome article of attire," — the outer robe or ἱμάτιον. "After a few trials the students, or most of

* The "Century Magazine," November, 1881.

them at least, made up their minds which throw they preferred, and the variety was left to their choice. Many of them, after a very little practice, wore their costumes with ease and satisfaction, and learned to arrange them without assistance. From the first it was decided to be an exceedingly comfortable dress, and much less troublesome than had been supposed." Every man who took part knows that whatever skill in this respect he acquired was owing to Mr. Millet's taste and inexhaustible good-nature.

To commit to memory three hundred Greek verses and a complicated musical accompaniment was a difficult task, yet it was accomplished by every member of the Chorus. The musical rehearsals were in part conducted by Mr. G. A. Burdett, a gentleman who subsequently graduated with the highest honors in music, and who rendered valuable assistance to Professor Paine in the labors of preparation.

From time to time, as new scenes were mastered, a small company would be gathered at the house of one of the gentlemen connected with the University, and the play so far as learned would be rehearsed. These entertainments were excellent breaks between the strict privacy of the regular rehearsals and the publicity of the performances, and are among the most pleasant memories of the time.

The first partial rehearsals were held toward the end of October, 1880; for five months they occurred three or four times a week; for the six weeks preceding the performances there was a rehearsal every day. At last the time came when an authoritative public announcement of the undertaking was necessary; previous to this the newspapers had contained only vague and often extravagant statements. The committee therefore issued a circular * which was published in the

* Appendix 1.

leading newspapers and forwarded to those whose support might be expected. The answers exceeded the highest expectations of all concerned; from all over the country came letters of inquiry and congratulation. Eighteen hours before the time appointed for the opening of the sale a line of men representing people who desired to buy tickets for their own use, or to speculate in them, was formed in front of the University Bookstore in Cambridge. Every ticket was taken in half an hour after the sale began. A similar spectacle was witnessed on each occasion when additional performances were announced. Tickets were afterwards purchased of speculators for five, ten, and fifteen dollars. On the day before the last performance, when it was distinctly understood that the play would not be repeated under any circumstances, the proprietor of the largest ticket-agency in Boston telegraphed to Cambridge offering twenty dol-

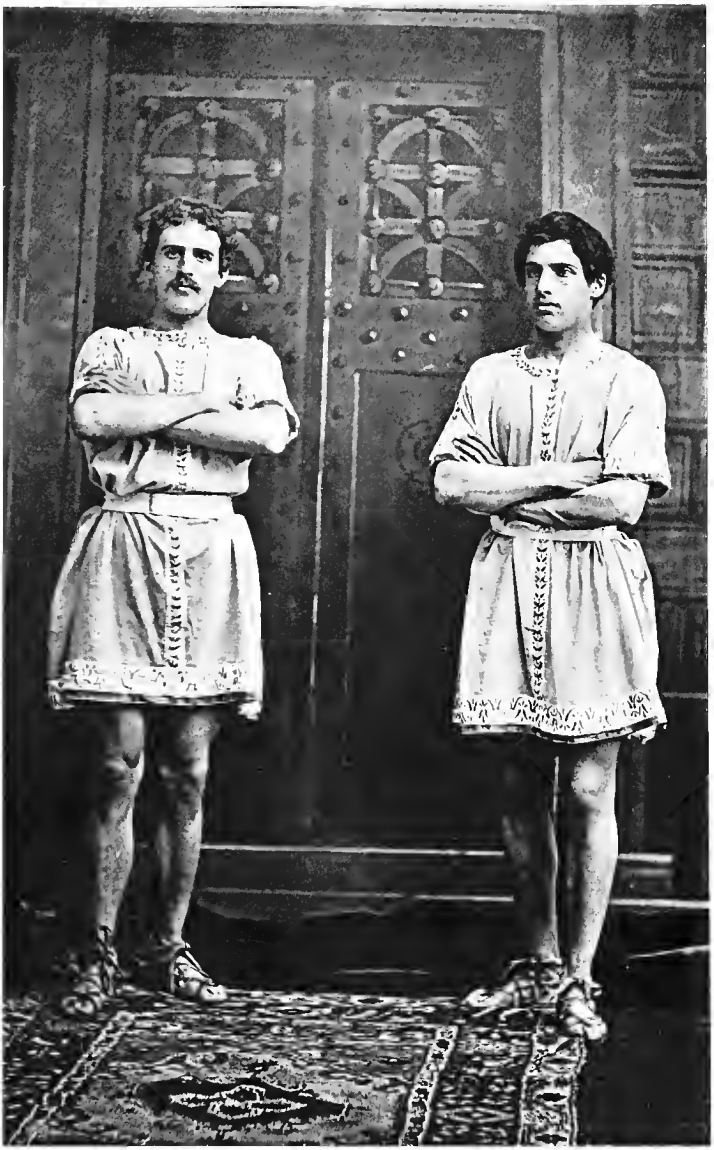
lars apiece for as many tickets as could be obtained. In a few instances prices much higher than this are known to have been paid.

The following item, with the editorial comment, from the "Harvard Daily Echo" of May 14, 1881, needs no explanation: —

"Prof. J. W. White will be glad to see all members of the University who are not provided with tickets to any performance of the Greek Play, on Saturday, at 10 A.M., in Sever 37, when he will furnish them with tickets to the dress rehearsal. No tickets will be sold for the rehearsal."

"The managers of the Greek Play have shown that it is their intention to give every student an opportunity of witnessing at least one performance, and they have thus silenced the only objection that has been made to their management."

The interest of the public was now thoroughly aroused, and the anxieties and hopes of the few were shared by the many. The



following extract from the "Boston Daily Advertiser" may serve as an example of the notices that appeared constantly: —

"The Greek Play to be produced next Tuesday evening creates the greatest excitement in Harvard circles. . . . Requests for extra performances have been received from all parts of the State, and liberal offers have come from New York for the play to be given there. Tuesday night will decide its success, and whether these offers can be accepted. The labor of production has been gigantic, and in every way deserving of a brilliant return."

The long period of preparation closed with the dress rehearsal. This occurred on Saturday evening, May 14th, and was in all respects similar to the regular performances, except that no tickets were sold, and that the representatives of the press were admitted on the condition that it should not be reported. As the dress rehearsal was private, no account of it will be given. The following extracts

from newspapers representing different sections of the country will show the interest with which it was watched, and the general verdict.

From the "Boston Daily Advertiser": —

"A full-dress private rehearsal of the 'Oedipus Tyrannus' took place at Sanders Theatre last night, in presence of a large number of invited guests, among whom were to be seen almost all the noted celebrities, literary, artistic, and scientific, known to Boston and its vicinity. The rehearsal went with a degree of smoothness that gave promise of a rare degree of excellence in the performance to take place on Tuesday evening. The effect of the costumes was extremely brilliant; the acting was unexpectedly vigorous and able; and Mr. Paine's music excited equal admiration and pleasure in its listeners. The general expression of opinion was of astonishment and gratification at the fine results attained in every essential. The whole affair, from its inception to the culmination, as seen last night, reflects the greatest credit on the taste, the judgment, and the ability of all concerned."

From the Boston "Evening Transcript": —

"Although respect for the wish expressed by those engaged in the production of the Greek Play at Harvard forbids us to describe or comment upon the 'dress rehearsal' of Saturday evening, we may at least be permitted to communicate the pleasing result of that performance, — the removal of the last doubt of a complete and memorable success. . . . Harvard again proves herself nobly representative of her time and country in making this most remarkable effort for art and for the drama. The labors of those who participated in the performance must have been as severe as they have been protracted, and the danger of possible failure must have made it a grave matter for all concerned in the University not immediately enlisted in the work. But the reward is now certain to equal the pains and the risk, and the whole will be a delightful and honorable thing to remember and recount among the glories of Harvard University."

From the "New York Sun": —

"The end seems to have been attained as nearly as was possible. . . . It is difficult to see how the

play could have been better rendered. It is a great honor to Harvard to have been the pioneer college in this country to achieve so arduous a work."

From the "Louisville (Kentucky) Post":—

"The first full-dress rehearsal by the students of Harvard College of the 'Oedipus Tyrannus,' in Sanders Theatre, Cambridge, Mass., on Saturday evening last, proved beyond reasonable doubt that the performance will be a success. The audience completely filled the theatre, and was very enthusiastic as well as critical, composed, as it was, of those who, from actual connection with the production, or from sympathy with the effort, are most interested and capable of passing judgment."

After the dress rehearsal there was a pause before the decisive effort. Each man spent it in adding strength at the points where he felt himself to be weak. The difficulties that had been seen had been fairly faced, and everybody had aimed high. *Le génie n'est que l'attention suivie:* the τεχνικόν had been

faithfully followed; was there no reason to hope that it would be transfigured into θεῖον when the crowning moment came?

V.

THE audience gathered in the Sanders Theatre on Tuesday evening, May 15, 1881, was in many ways a remarkable one. As was said, it has probably never been equalled in America for literary distinction. The familiar faces of most of those who represent American letters to-day were to be seen in all directions. Longfellow, Emerson, Holmes, Curtis, Howells, were there; of somewhat less distinguished men it would be easier to name those who were absent. College presidents and professors from all parts of the country, several eminent magistrates, the editors of many of the leading journals, all the instructors at Harvard, — no

branch of learning was without its distinguished representatives. Owing to the presence of ladies in large numbers the appearance of the audience was as brilliant as its reputation.

In respect to its state of mind, also, the audience was remarkable. Many persons had come with doubt as to the feasibility, or even the propriety, of the undertaking; others thought it an excellent thing for young men to do, but were prepared to be thoroughly wearied; others again had come ready to mourn the absence of the classic glories, and to dislike what they felt sure must be a pretentious amateur performance. Those who were best pleased that the voice of the old Athenian days was to be heard again, were naturally solicitous lest some youthful extravagance or unforeseen hitch should mar the effect of the whole. From the person who sat in blankest ignorance of what was coming, to the one who had

formed all his opinions beforehand, every state of mind was represented. One who carefully observed the thousand faces could see that a doubtful and curious expectancy was hidden beneath the universal smile.

The seats on the floor of the theatre had been removed to make place for the θυμέλη and the Chorus. Outside the low barrier which surrounded this open space sat an orchestra of forty performers and a supplementary chorus of sixty voices. A volume containing the text of Professor White's edition of the Oedipus and Professor Lewis Campbell's translation, on opposite pages, had been published by the committee. The programme (of which a reduced fac-simile is given in Appendix 2) was an interesting production, bearing the Harvard seal, and printed in Greek with the exception of a few lines of request to the audience preceded by the amusing statement, μετεφράσθη ἕνια χάριν τῶν μὴ ἑλληνιζόντων. The doors

were closed five minutes before the commencement of the performance.

The scene behind the long and narrow stage is the palace of Oedipus, king of Thebes, — a stately building with its frieze and columns. There is a large central door with two broad steps, and two smaller side doors; all three are closed. In the centre of the stage in front is a large altar; beside each of the smaller doors of the palace is another altar. A flight of steps leads from the stage at each side. The sound of the closing doors has warned the audience that the long-expected moment is at hand, and an immediate silence ensues. Under these circumstances the first notes of the orchestra come with great effect and the entire prelude is unusually impressive. As it closes, the spectators are sympathetic and expectant.

Slowly the crimson curtains on the right-hand side below the stage are drawn apart,

and the Priest of Zeus enters, leaning on a staff, a venerable and striking figure. In Plate VI. the beauty of his drapery is seen. Behind him come two little children. They are dressed in soft white tunics and cloaks, their hair is bound with white fillets, and they carry in their hands olive branches twined with wool, —

ἐλαίας θ' ὑψιγέννητον κλάδον,
λήνει μεγίστῳ σωφρόνως ἐστεμμένον.

This shows that they come as suppliants. Behind the children come boys, then youths, and then old men. All are dressed in white and carry suppliant boughs; in the costumes of the men, the delicate fabric of the undergarment, the *χιτών*, contrasts beautifully with the heavy folds of the *ἱμάτιον*. With grave attentive faces the procession crosses the front of the stage, and mounts the steps; the suppliants lay down their branches and seat themselves on the steps of the altars. The priest alone remains standing, facing the palace door.

The first impression upon the spectators was fortunate. The innocent looks of the children, the handsome figures of the men, the simplicity and solemnity of their movements, set off as they were by the fine drapery of their garments and the striking groups around the altars, had an instant and deep effect. It is safe to say that fears of crudeness or failure began rapidly to vanish. The spectacle presented at this moment was one of the most impressive of the play; it is well shown in Plate VIII., although the groups are only partially visible.

After a short pause the great doors of the palace are thrown back, and the attendants of Oedipus enter and take up their positions on each side. They wear thin lavender tunics reaching nearly to the knee. Their looks are directed to the interior of the palace, whence, in a moment, Oedipus enters. His royal robes gleam now with the purple of silk and now with the red of gold; gold

embroidery glitters on his crimson tunic and on his white sandals; his crown gives him dignity and height.

For an instant he surveys the suppliants, and then addresses them. Mr. Riddle's voice is soft and musical, and the words come full and solemn:—

Ὦ τέκνα, Κάδμου τοῦ πάλαι νέα τροφή.

The spectators have heard the first Greek words. Descending the steps as he speaks, Oedipus asks the reason of the presence of this kneeling suppliant throng. So great is his interest, he says, in the city and its sons, that he was unwilling to learn by messengers, but has come himself, "great Oedipus, of universal fame": let this aged priest answer for them all. The old man tells the sad story of the plague. The city is again in desperate plight; Oedipus baffled the bloodthirsty Sphinx, can he not prove himself a double saviour?

"Thou, then, come,
Noblest of mortals, give our city rest
From trouble." *

This is not new to Oedipus; indeed, as ruler, he has borne a triple grief. Many plans for relief have been already tried; latest and best, he has sent Creon, the brother of his queen, to the oracle at Delphi to learn in what way the city may be saved; and it is already more than time for him to return. While Oedipus is speaking, the children on the left of the stage have descried some one approaching, and one of them has pointed him out to the priest. It is Creon, who enters with rapid strides, wearing a wreath of bay leaves sparkling with berries, the symbol of a favorable answer. He is dressed in the short salmon-colored tunic and crimson cloak, with hat and staff. A hasty greeting follows; and Oedipus, the priest, and the suppliants wait for the answer of the oracle. Creon judges

* The quotations, with few exceptions, are from Professor Lewis Campbell's translation of the Oedipus.

it best not to speak out before so many people.

> "My message is, that even our woes,
> Borne right unto their issue, shall be well."

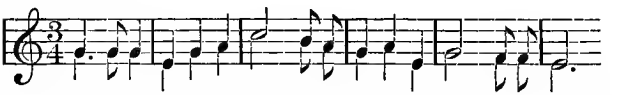
This is the moment represented in Plate VIII.

The eagerness of Oedipus brooks no such ambiguity, so Creon speaks clearly. The oracle has declared that the plague will cease when those who murdered Laius, and are still dwelling in the land, shall have been punished by banishment or death. Oedipus then questions Creon concerning the particulars of the death of Laius, and is informed that he started on his journey to Delphi and never returned; that an attendant arrived and reported that the rest of the party had been slain by a band of robbers. But why, asks the king, did you not pursue and punish the wretches? Creon pauses and glances round the theatre, and in the hush which follows he approaches Oedipus and utters the

word which recalls at once the suffering of the city and the services of him addressed: ἡ ποικιλῳδὸς Σφίγξ, — "the riddle-singing Sphinx," — and the harsh word echoes through the silent theatre. "Good!" says Oedipus, his pride gratified and his ambition roused; "then *I* will find them out." With the assurance of speedy aid he leads Creon into the palace, and the attendants follow and close the doors. Slowly the white-robed suppliants rise; the petition being granted, each one takes his bough, and led by the priest they descend the steps and disappear.

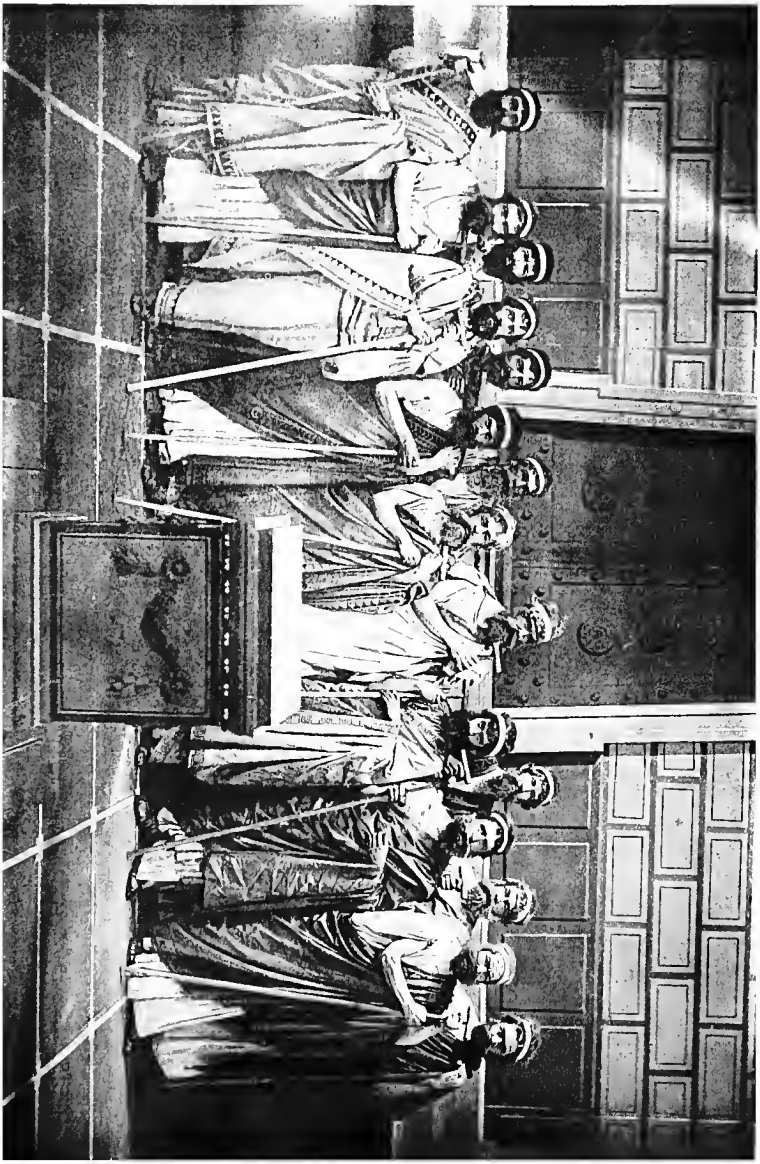
As the last figure passes out of sight the notes of the orchestra are heard once more, this time with a measured beat which instantly attracts attention, and the Chorus of old men of Thebes issues from the same entrance. They are men of various ages, dressed in tunics reaching to the instep and full ἱμάτια, of harmonious soft warm colors.

The excellence of the costumes was marked; each man seemed to have worn his dress for years, and to exhibit his individuality in the folds of it. They enter three deep, marching to the solemn beat of the music; and as the first rank comes in sight of the audience the strains of the choral ode burst from their lips.



Shoulder to shoulder and foot to foot the old men make their way to the altar on the floor of the theatre and take up their positions around it.* This entrance of the Chorus was surpassed in dramatic effect by few features of the play: the rhythmical move-

* In Plate IX. the general appearance of the Chorus is well shown, although the effect of the picturesque grouping is lost, it being necessary to crowd the men together in order to bring so many faces within the focus of one lens. A certain peculiar expression is accounted for by the fact that a very brilliant electric light was suspended in front of them. The Coryphaeus is the tallest figure of the group.



ments, the coloring and drapery, the dignity of the faces, the impressive music sung in unison by the fifteen trained voices, — all these combined to produce a startling effect on the audience.

The chorus represents the citizens summoned by Oedipus to hear of his determination to investigate the murder of Laius. They are singing in appeal to Apollo and Athena, praying that this day may see the end of the woes of Thebes.

"Kind voice of Heaven, soft-breathing from the height
Of Pytho * rich in gold to Thebè bright,
What wilt thou bring to-day ?
Ah, Delian Paean, say !
My heart hangs on thy word with trembling awe :
What new-given law,
Or what returning in Time's circling round
Wilt thou unfold ? Tell us, immortal sound,
Daughter of golden Hope, we pray, we pray !"

"And swiftly speed afar,
Wind-borne on backward car,
This shieldless war-god † with loud onset sweeping,

* Delphi.
† The plague, — "the unarmed Mars."

To oarless Thracian tide,
Or ocean chambers wide,
Where Amphitritè lone her couch is keeping.
Day ruins what night spares ; O thou whose hand
Wields lightning, blast him with thy thundering brand."

The strophes in this ode are sung by the dramatic chorus only, the antistrophes by the dramatic chorus and the supplementary chorus together.

As the music ceases, Oedipus enters. He reiterates his determination to secure and punish the murderer of his predecessor. If any one knows aught, let him speak out; Oedipus calls down curses on the heads of those who, knowing of the matter, are silent, and bitterly curses the murderer himself.

"Let his crushed life
Wither forlorn in hopeless misery.
And I pray Heaven, should he or they be housed
With mine own knowledge in my home, that I
May suffer what I imprecate on them."

The days of dark oracles and strange adventures are indeed forgotten, and Oedipus

thinks of himself only as the worshipped ruler of a mighty city. All these woes, as a Greek audience knew well, Oedipus was calling down upon himself. They would perceive with awe the first suggestions of the fulfilment of fate.

By the advice of Creon, Oedipus has summoned a famous seer, the blind Teiresias, a man who holds direct communion with the Gods. At this moment Teiresias enters, a towering, venerable figure, with long white hair and beard. He is guided to the stage by a boy, whose blue cloak contrasts with the snowy draperies of the old man. Plate IV. is an excellent portrait.

To him

> "whose universal thought controls
> All knowledge and all mystery, in heaven
> And on the earth beneath,"

Oedipus reverently appeals. In Teiresias lies the only hope of the city: it is a privilege to use the power one has for good.

"Thou, then,
Withhold not any word of augury
Or other divination that thou knowest,
But rescue Thebè, and thyself, and me,
And purge this dire pollution of the dead."

Plate X. represents the scene at this moment.

The first words of Teiresias, in Mr. Guild's deep voice, take the spectators by surprise. φεῦ, φεῦ, — "Ah me! ah me!"

"Terrible is knowledge to the man
Whom knowledge profits not. This well I knew,
But had forgotten. Else had I ne'er come hither."

He knows all the truth and foresees the horror which would follow his words. He begs to be sent home again, and counsels Oedipus to seek no farther. The king is bitterly disappointed, and his ever-ready anger rises. He has implored, he now threatens; Teiresias declares that nothing shall induce him to speak. This is one of the grand scenes of the play: two powerful

natures are in conflict; the spectators are greatly moved by the contrast between the passion of the king and the determination of the seer. Which will conquer? It is the fate of Oedipus to bring down woes upon his head, and now he declares that he sees in Teiresias the abettor of the murder.

> "If thou hadst eyes,
> Sole murderer had I declared thee too."

This is more than the old man can bear; that he, the favored of the Gods, a prince and priest, should be thus reviled by the sinner whom he is trying to shield, makes further silence impossible.

> "Is 't possible? I charge thee to abide
> By that thou hast proclaimed; and from this hour
> Speak not to any Theban or to me.
> Thou art the foul polluter of this land."

Roused by the intensity of his own utterance, the old man goes on to declare that the other things prophesied by the oracle

have come true, and that all men will soon reproach the sinner. Fearful words are these: the attendants start forward, and the frightened Chorus gather near the stage. It would seem that so terrible and direct an accusation would instantly remind the king of the prophecy at Delphi and the event which followed. But Oedipus is blinded by his anger, and pays no heed to what seem lying words. So the blind man sees, and the man whose outer sight is clear is lost in the blindness of his soul. Oedipus recalls at this moment the fact that it was by Creon's counsel that Teiresias was summoned: what is clearer than that they are together plotting against the throne? So he denounces them both, and threatens punishment; if Teiresias were not an old man he should receive it on the spot. Teiresias calls the boy to lead him away, but before going he prophesies the farther fate of Oedipus in a terrible speech: —

"I tell thee this : the man whom thou so long
Seekest with threats and mandates for the murder
Of Laius, that very man is here,
By name an alien, but in season due
He shall be shown true Theban, and small joy
Shall have therein ; for blind, instead of seeing,
And poor, who once was rich, he shall go forth
Staff-guided, groping, o'er a foreign land.
He shall be shown to be with his own children
Brother and sire in one, of her who bore him
Husband at once and offspring, of his father
Bedmate and murderer. Go ; take now these words
Within and weigh them ; if thou find me false,
Say then that divination taught me nothing." *

The two men part in deadly anger, Oedipus going within the palace and the boy leading Teiresias down the steps. The scene was admirably acted, and the significance of it is vividly present to the audience ; for the first time the performance is interrupted by prolonged applause.

Once more the music sounds, and the Chorus gives voice to its feelings concerning the strange scene which has just been enacted.

* Symonds's translation.

At first the music is weird, and expresses horror and anxious doubt.

> "Whom hath the mystic stone
> Declarèd to have done
> Horrors unnamable with blood-stained hand?
> With speed of storm-swift car
> 'T is time he fled afar
> With mighty footsteps hurrying from the land.
> For, armed with lightning brand,
> There leaps upon his track the son of Jove,
> And close behind the unerring Destinies move."

Toward the close of the chorus the music becomes expressive of hope, and the last bars symbolize the confidence in Oedipus which the words express.

> "Zeus and his son
> Know surely all that o'er the world is done:
> But that the seer
> Hath wisdom clear,
> Or more endowment than the crowd,
> Was never yet with evidence allowed.
> A man with wit
> May pass the bound another man hath won;
> But never, till I see fulfilment fit,
> Will I confirm the blame
> They cast upon his name.

Wise he was found beneath the searching sun,
And kind to Thebè, when the Sphinx came forth
And sang. My heart shall never doubt his worth."

As the strains of music die away Creon is seen hastily ascending the steps on the right. He is no longer dressed as a traveller, but in garments suited to his high rank. His tunic is of delicate dark crimson material, with a gold border; his ἱμάτιον is of bright crimson cashmere, with a broader gold border; his sandals are of crimson and gold. He strides to the centre of the stage and bursts out in indignant denial of the charges that Oedipus has made against him.

While the Chorus, through its leader, is endeavoring to moderate the indignation of Creon, Oedipus enters from the palace. At such a meeting a quarrel is inevitable. The king does not hesitate to begin it: —

"Insolent, art thou here? Hadst thou the face
To bring thy boldness near my palace-roof,
Convicted of contriving 'gainst my life
And laying robber hands upon my state?"

For some time Creon maintains the calm of innocence, and asks but to be allowed to speak in his own defence: —

> "First on this very point, hear me declare" —
>
> "I will not hear that thou art not a villain,"

is the contemptuous interruption of the king, who nevertheless listens, though with manifest impatience, to Creon's long and logical defence. "How absurd," argues Creon, "to suspect me of trying to supplant you! I am much better off as I am; I have the privileges and pleasures of royalty without its cares. Go to Delphi and satisfy yourself that I brought back the true answer. Thus to cast off a faithful friend is worse than folly."

The Chorus, too, advises the king that "swift is not sure in thought." But it is not in the nature of Oedipus to listen to counsels of moderation; resuming his extreme tone he declares that Creon shall die. Creon is star-

tled out of his forced calmness, and a sharp altercation ensues. Just as this reaches its height the doors of the palace are seen to open, and the Chorus bids both angry speakers cease, as Jocasta is approaching. The attendants of Jocasta enter and place themselves on each side of the door, and a moment later the queen herself stands upon the threshold. Oedipus turns to her with welcome, and Creon with a gesture of appeal.*

* Plate XI. shows the stage at this moment. In the article to which reference has previously been made, Mr. Millet bases the explanation of his scheme of costume upon this scene. He says: —

"It was part of the original scheme that in each group the most prominent character should, as far as possible, be the focus, not only of interest in the text, but from the point of view of costume. Let us see how the first complex group fulfilled this condition. On the stage left stood Oedipus, in rich but deep-toned red; on the right, Creon, equally in red, but of a color entirely different in scale; the attendants of the king, in lavender tunics bordered with gold-embroidered white, flanked the doorway; and the two attendants of Jocasta, in delicate blue and salmon, brought the eye by a pleasing graduation in intensity of color and strength of tone up to the figure of the queen, clothed in lustrous and ample drapery."

Her dress consists of a richly trimmed silvery undergarment, and an ἱμάτιον of crimped pale yellow silk. She wears a crown, bracelets, and necklace, and white sandals embroidered with gold.

No man can hope to assume all the grace of a female figure, nor can any costume make a man look entirely like a woman. It must be said, however, that the appearance of Mr. Opdycke was charmingly feminine, and that the grace of his movements was remarkable. His assumption of a very difficult rôle was such as fully to reward a long and faithful study, and to justify the hearty praise with which his acting was received.

The first words of Jocasta are a disappointment to both the men who welcome her appearance. She has heard their angry voices, and has come to silence them: —

> "Unhappy that ye are, why have ye reared
> Your wordy rancor 'mid the city's harms?
> Have you no shame, to stir up private broils

In such a time as this? Get thee within!
And thou, too, Creon! nor enlarge your griefs
To make a mountain out of nothingness."

This speech of Jocasta is followed by a *kommos*, that is, a passage in which the song of the Chorus alternates with the spoken words of the principal characters. The Chorus appeals to Oedipus to spare Creon, who has always shown himself wise, and has now hallowed by an oath his denial of the charges. At the prayer of his people Oedipus yields: Creon may go, but hatred shall follow him.

"Let me alone, then, and begone!"

"I go,
Unchanged to these, though I have found thee blind."

And with a gesture of reproach Creon turns and leaves the stage.

Jocasta now demands the cause of the quarrel, and is informed by the king that Creon and a knavish soothsayer have accused him of the murder of Laius. Such fears, Jocasta says, are soon quieted; "no mortal

thing is touched by prophecy." Did not the oracle declare that Laius should perish by the hands of his own son? Yet he was slain by robbers at a place where three ways meet, and the child perished in the wilds of Cithaeron.

> "So Loxias neither brought upon the boy
> His father's murder, nor on Laius
> The thing he greatly feared, death by his son.
> Such issues come of prophesying words,
> Therefore regard them not."

One of the expressions of Jocasta has roused strange memories in the king. "Where three ways met," that was where he slew the traveller. "Where was this place?" he asks. "It was in Phocis, and the roads lead to Daulia and to Delphi." "How long ago?" "Just before you appeared, to save the state." "Yes; tell me how Laius looked." "He was tall, with gray hair; in figure much like you." "Yes, yes. Tell me one thing more. Was he alone, or attended?" "There were five

in all, one a herald, and Laius rode in the chariot."

"Woe! woe! 'T is clear as daylight."

From the excited questions of Oedipus and the careful replies of Jocasta, anxious only to dispel all fears, one thing is proved: Oedipus is the murderer of Laius. A single slender hope remains; the attendant who escaped reported that Laius had been slain by "robbers." Should he still assert this, Oedipus is saved from the guilt of being the polluter of the state.

"One man and many cannot be the same."

Jocasta knows nothing of the youth of Oedipus, of his journey to Delphi, and of his adventure in the cross-roads; she is therefore at a loss to understand his fears. So Oedipus tells the whole story as it has already been described. It is a long, passionate speech, and Mr. Riddle's rendering is clear and powerful. The climax is reached when Oedipus,

in a voice at once triumphant and remorseful, shouts, "I slew them every one." Instantly his demeanor changes, all the triumph drops from his tone, and he cries piteously, —

> "Now if there be
> Aught of connection or relationship
> Between yon stranger and King Laius,
> What wretch on earth was e'er so lost as I?"

Jocasta again comforts him by showing that should the attendant now assert that the party was attacked by one man, still the oracle would be proved false, as it had declared that her son should kill Laius, and the babe had perished long before. Oedipus catches at the crumb of comfort, and they go within.

The choral ode which follows is one of great beauty. It begins with a prayer for purity of life, and reverence of thought and speech.

"Deep in my life, by Fate impressed,
Let holiness of word and action rest,
And sinless thought, by those Eternal Laws
Controll'd, whose being Heaven alone did cause."

The second strophe is a protest against impiety, suggested by the impious words of Jocasta.

"Who walks disdainfully with hand or tongue,
Not fearing acts of wrong,
Nor reverencing each temple's holy shrine?
A horrid fate be thine,
For thine abandoned greed,
Who seekest gain beyond thy rightful meed,
Nor sparest things divine,
And in thy madness touchest things accurst.
Who, when such crimes have burst,
Can look for shelter from the wrathful shower?
If such a spirit be in power,
And gilded with preferment still advance,
What means my service in the sacred dance?"

As the chorus closes, Jocasta enters in a new state of mind. She has comforted Oedipus by ridiculing all oracles; but she is not without faith in the power of the Gods, and she brings frankincense and gar-

lands, and lays them with a prayer upon the altar.

While she is speaking, an old man has entered on the left below the stage. He is dressed as a common traveller, in a tunic and short cloak, his hat slung over his shoulder, and a stout staff in his hand. It is the messenger from Corinth. He looks round as if in search of something, and as soon as the queen has finished her prayer he inquires of the Chorus where the home of Oedipus, or, better still, the king himself, can be found. He is promptly informed that the mansion he sees is the palace of Oedipus, and that the lady before it is the queen. With a profound salutation as he ascends to the stage, he declares himself to be the bearer of news at once good and bad. Old Polybus, king of Corinth, is dead, and the citizens are about to make Oedipus king. This is indeed news to Jocasta. Oedipus has long avoided Corinth lest he should slay his father, Poly-

bus; now he can return, as king, all fear dispelled.

> "Voices of prophecy! where are ye now?"

Oedipus enters in response to her summons. His royal robes have been exchanged for simpler ones of white and gold. He, too, learns the news with triumph.

> "Ah! my Jocasta, who again will heed
> The Pythian hearth oracular, and birds
> Screaming in air, blind guides!"

One dark thought, however, cuts his exultation short. He need no longer fear to be his father's murderer, but there is a second horror in his fate; his mother, Merope, still lives at Corinth, and while she lives he dares not return. The messenger, rejoicing in the good news he brings, and hoping for proportionate reward, makes bold to ask the reason of these fears. On learning it, a smile full of meaning crosses his face. Is this the only

thing that the king dreads? Then let him put it aside,

> "Because with Polybus thou hadst no kin."
>
> "Why? Was not he the author of my life?"
>
> "As much as I am, and no more than I."
>
> "How can my father be no more to me
> Than who is nothing?"
>
> "In begetting thee
> Nor I nor he had any part at all."

The old man smiles broadly at his own humorous way of telling this good news. It is not every one who is privileged to remove a king's fears. And he proceeds to tell how he gave Oedipus when a babe to King Polybus, having received him from one of the shepherds of Laius, who had found him in the wilderness of Cithaeron. He tells of the cruel thong, and alludes to the scar on the king's ankles.

But Jocasta? At the other end of the stage the queen is writhing in anguish. The deep-red cloak which she wears is twisted

about her; now she flings her hands up and seems about to speak, then her hands are pressed on her mouth to stop the cries which rise, or on her bosom to silence the beating of her heart. She rushes toward the king, but stops half-way; her face shows the tortures of her soul. The truth is all too clear to her. The spectator feels that this suspense cannot last, and relief comes when the Chorus suggests that perhaps Jocasta can tell something about the shepherd of Laius. When appealed to by Oedipus, she forces the suffering from her face and turns with a smile.

> "What matter who? Regard not, nor desire
> Even vainly to remember aught he saith."

But Oedipus has gone beyond recall. Her last appealing words are scorned, and with the language and the gesture of despair she rushes from the stage.

> "O horrible! O lost one! This alone
> I speak to thee, and no word more for ever."

The Chorus expresses the feelings of the startled spectators: —

> "Oedipus, wherefore is Jocasta gone,
> Driven madly by wild grief? I needs must fear
> Lest from this silence she make sorrows spring."

> "Let her! Yet I will choose to know my birth."

In the song which follows, the Chorus indulges in fanciful speculations concerning the parentage of Oedipus. The tenor solo in the antistrophe was sung by Mr. George L. Osgood.

As the music ceases the attendants of Oedipus appear at the entrance on the right, supporting a strange figure between them. It is an aged man, with grizzled hair and beard, clothed in coarse homespun cloth, and with a rough, untanned sheepskin over his shoulders. He supports himself on a sapling staff which he has cut in the woods. He mounts the steps with difficulty, and faces the king. He is no stranger to the errand on which he

has been brought, and with the greatest difficulty he is made to speak. The contrast between the eagerness of the messenger from Corinth to tell all he knows, and the silence of the tender-hearted old shepherd is very striking. The shepherd cannot bear the other's telltale chatter, and with the words, "Confusion seize thee and thine evil tongue!" he swings his staff to strike him. The scene at this moment is shown in Plate XII. At a gesture from Oedipus the attendant stops the blow. The old man must be made to speak.

> "Thou wilt not speak to please us, but the lash
> Will make thee speak."
>
> "By all that 's merciful,
> Scourge not this aged frame!"
>
> "Pinion him straight!"

And the muscular attendants spring forward and seize him. Then the truth is wrung from him, word by word. He gave the child to the Corinthian; it came from the palace;

they said it was the son of Laius; Queen Jocasta herself placed it in his hands; they said that an oracle had declared that it should kill its father.

> "What then possessed thee to give up the child
> To this old man?"
>
> "Pity, my sovereign lord!
> Supposing he would take him far away
> Unto the land whence he was come. But he
> Preserved him to great sorrow. For if thou
> Art whom he gives thee out, be well assured
> Thou bear'st a heavy doom."

The portrait — Plate V. — represents the shepherd at this moment.

The truth is out; the oracles are not falsified; his father's murderer, his mother's husband, Oedipus faces his doom. With a fearful, choking cry he pulls his robes over his head and face, and bursts into the palace.

> "Woe! woe! woe! woe! All cometh clear at last."

How great the irony of fate! As Jocasta, in her attempts at comfort, suggested the

"place where three ways meet," so the Corinthian messenger, in filling, as he thinks, the measure of the king's joy, utters the words which damn.

> "So from that spring whence comfort seemed to come,
> Discomfort swells." *

And how superbly Sophocles has pictured it! The passionate and haughty king, flinging his imprecations in heedless wrath, is overwhelmed by their recoil.

> "By most righteous doom,
> Who drugged the cup with curses to the brim,
> Himself hath drunk damnation to the dregs."

This scene — shown in Plate XIII. — was the dramatic climax of the play. The acting led up to it gradually by the excited conversation and the shepherd's blow. When Oedipus burst through the doors of the palace, his attendants quickly followed him; the horror-stricken messengers turned with despair-

* Macbeth: quoted by Campbell.

ing gestures and descended the steps, the one to the right, the other to the left, and a profound silence fell upon the theatre.

In the opening strains of the last choral ode, which now ring out, the emotions of the scene are wonderfully expressed. Each one recognizes the solemnity and depth of his own feelings in their pathetic tones.

The theme is one which Solon made famous, — until death no man's life can safely be called happy.

> "O tribes of living men,
> How nothing-worth I count you while ye stand!
> For who of all the train
> Draws more of happiness into his hand
> Than to seem bright, and seeming, fade in gloom?"

As the ode closes, the palace doors are opened violently from within, and the second messenger rushes on the stage. He is a servant from the palace, clad, like the at-

tendants, in a short light tunic. He brings a tale of horror: Oedipus, on entering, had called for a sword, and demanded to know where Jocasta was. No one would tell him; but at last, seeing the doors of the bedchamber shut, he had broken through them and disclosed the body of the queen hanging by the bed. Tearing down the body, he had snatched from the shoulders the golden clasps and had thrust them into his eyes, saying, —

> "Henceforth they should not see the evil
> Suffered or done by him in the past time,
> But evermore in darkness now should scan
> The features he ought never to have seen."

In a moment Oedipus himself appears, leaning on his attendants, his pale face marred by bloody stains. The dismayed Chorus hide their faces in their robes, and the king's voice is broken with sobs as he cries, *αἰαῖ, αἰαῖ, δύστανος ἐγώ.* The lament of Oedipus is given by Mr. Riddle with great power; the ringing Greek syllables grow more and

more impressive, and the haggard, blood-stained face grows more terrible.

ἰὼ σκότου
νέφος ἐμὸν ἀπότροπον, ἐπιπλόμενον ἄφατον,
ἀδάματόν τε καὶ δυσούριστον ὄν.

"O cloud of dark, on me
Sent loweringly!
Hideous, unutterable,
Invincible!
Too surely wafted on."

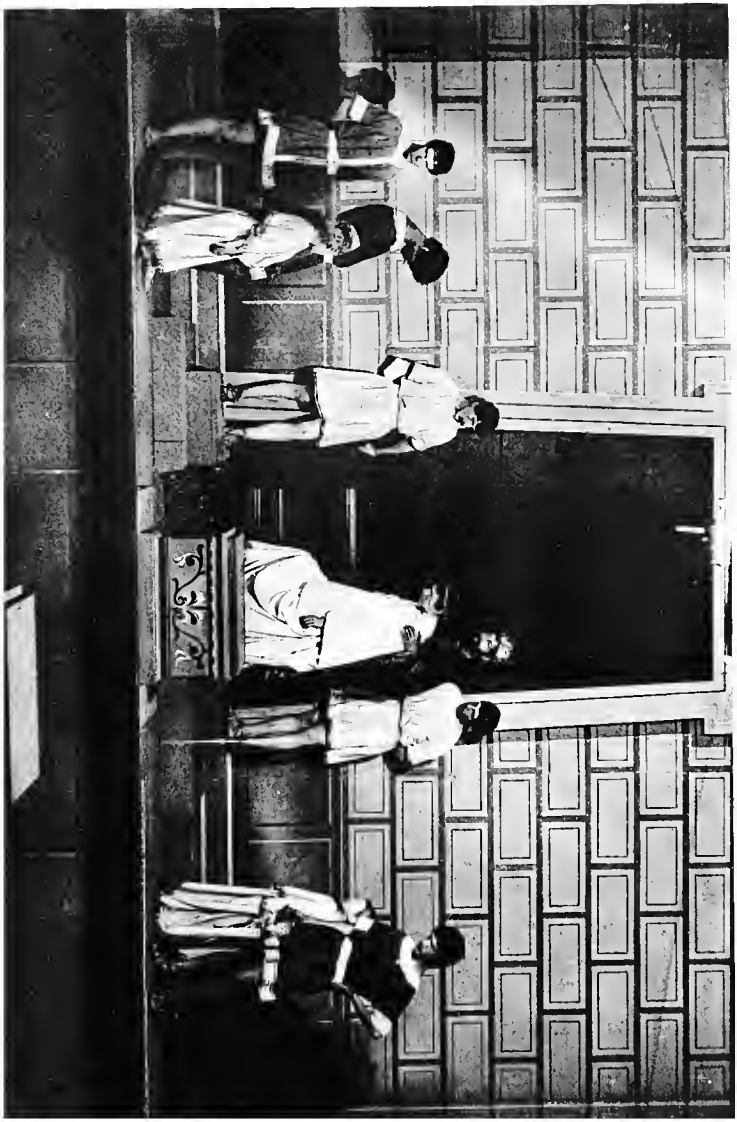
In the ensuing dialogue between Oedipus and the Chorus, the king pictures all the ill he has done and suffered; father, mother, children, the three ways, Cithaeron, Thebes, the oracles, — he spares himself no bitter memory. The closing passage of his long lament is perhaps the most fearful thing in any literature.

ὦ γάμοι γάμοι,
ἐφύσαθ' ἡμᾶς, καὶ φυτεύσαντες πάλιν
ἀνεῖτε ταὐτὸν σπέρμα, κἀπεδείξατε
πατέρας, ἀδελφούς, παῖδας, αἷμ' ἐμφύλιον,
νύμφας, γυναῖκας, μητέρας τε, χὠπόσα
αἴσχιστ' ἐν ἀνθρώποισιν ἔργα γίγνεται.

As Oedipus is begging to be slain or thrust out of the land, the approach of Creon, who has resumed his royal powers, is announced. The memory of all his injustice to Creon overwhelms Oedipus, and he cannot bear to meet him. But he is blind and unable to flee, so he hides his face and waits in silence. Creon enters, crowned, followed by two attendants. (See Plate XIV.) His first words are reassuring; the new king does not come with mocking or reproach, but directs that a sight so offensive to earth and heaven be hidden within the palace. Oedipus asks the boon of banishment, but is informed by the cautious Creon that the God must be consulted. Then the blind man begs that his wife be buried decently, and reiterates his prayer that he may be permitted to leave the city which he has afflicted. And one thing more he asks, — that he may embrace his daughters again. By a sign Creon despatches his own at-

tendants to bring them, and while Oedipus is still speaking their voices are heard.

Antigone and Ismene now enter, led by the attendants of Creon, and are placed in the arms of Oedipus, who falls on his knees beside them, and addresses them with saddest words. The children are too young to appreciate the horror of the scene, but they are filled with pity for their father's pain. There is a look of genuine sympathy on the two bright faces which watch the kneeling figure. Creon has retired to the right of the stage and has wrapped his robe round him, unable to bear the sight of the terrible farewell. He is summoned by Oedipus to give his hand in token of his promise to care for the helpless girls. The children fall back, the blind man waits with outstretched hand, and Creon slowly and sadly walks across the stage and gives the sign. Then Oedipus turns again to his little ones. The painful scene, however, has lasted long enough, and Creon orders



Oedipus to leave his children and withdraw. It is a dreadful separation, but the king's order is imperative. So Oedipus tears himself away, his attendants throw open the doors, the attendants of Creon take the children by the hand, and Creon himself leads Oedipus up the steps and into the palace. (Plate XV.) The children and the second messenger follow; the attendants of Oedipus enter last and gently close the doors.

The music sounds again in pathetic tones, and the Coryphaeus expresses for his fellows the lesson of life.

> "Ye men of Thebes, behold this Oedipus,
> Who knew the famous riddle and was noblest,
> Whose fortune who saw not with envious glances?
> And, lo! in what a sea of direst trouble
> He now is plunged. From hence the lesson learn ye,
> To reckon no man happy till ye witness
> The closing day; until he pass the border
> Which severs life from death, unscathed by sorrow." *

With bowed heads the old men of Thebes retire to the city, and the play is over. There

* Plumptre's translation.

is a moment's silence, and then the theatre rings with applause. It seems inappropriate, however, and ceases almost as suddenly as it began. The play has left such a solemn impression that the usual customs seem unfitting, and the audience disperses quietly.

A few minutes later the theatre is in darkness, and the actors go home not wholly certain of the result of their long task.

The newspapers of the following morning set all doubts at rest, and showed the fulfilment of all hopes.

From the "Boston Daily Advertiser."

In all simplicity and sincerity we say there can be no doubt that the performance was remarkably successful, and afforded great and peculiar pleasure to a critical audience. . . . Here everything conspired in a wonderful way, the drama itself having such imaginative vividness, and every detail of representation being carried out with dignity, absolute precision and accuracy, and with a wonderful smoothness,

resulting from most careful preparation under most competent and learned instructors. From the moment when, near the close of the instrumental introduction, the company of suppliants made their slow entrance from the right, and passing through the orchestra to the left, mounted the stage and laid their votive offerings on the altars before the palace, many a spectator must have forgotten his country and century, and have felt himself a Greek of the Greeks. Quite aside, also, from the acting and music, the great beauty of the correct costumes, and the fine *tableaux vivants* made by the groups of players was a feast to the eye and fancy throughout the evening. The acting as a whole was remarkably and surprisingly good. Most of the players were only amateurs, and of course showed their want of professional training; but there was extraordinarily little of immaturity in performance, both as to quality and as to quantity, considering the circumstances of the occasion."

From the Boston "Evening Transcript": —

"The production of the Oedipus Tyrannus of Sophocles at Cambridge, last night, was as brilliant a success in every way as could have been

desired. Indeed, there was scarcely room for any miscarriage, so carefully and thoroughly had everything been prepared during the past six months. With a clear conception as to what was to be done, with practically unlimited means at command for its execution, and with the resources of the University in the way of young men of character and brain to draw on for talent and self-sacrificing labor, and learned scholars for counsel and training, this triumph was almost assured in advance. It is on all hands pronounced the most perfect and worthy reproduction of Greek drama in modern times. The *éclat* of the occasion, though not exceeding its merits, resounds throughout the country. The leading journals have been represented at the last rehearsal and first performance by special correspondents, and their elaborate accounts have been printed, accompanied by editorial comments, showing that the unique interest and importance of the event have been fully appreciated beyond the circle of the community of Boston and Cambridge."

From the "Boston Journal."

"The first public performance of the Oedipus Tyrannus of Sophocles, at Sanders Theatre, Cam-

bridge, last evening, was also the first performance of this play in its original language in recent times, and the first presentation of a Greek drama in this country. The event was therefore interesting for its novelty, as well as for its dramatic and scholastic importance. Its success was pronounced and instant; and indeed it may be doubted if a Greek play has ever been so thoroughly well presented since the times and audiences for which it was originally written. . . . The production was a perfect one in every detail, being throughout consistent, dignified, strong, and fully accordant in earnest spirit with all we have heretofore conceived of the realities of the Greek stage. . . . It is an increasing matter of marvel to all who will consider it, that this play has ever been produced, even with the great resources at the command of Harvard College."

From the Boston "Evening Traveller": —

"The performance of the Oedipus, last night, at Cambridge, brought delight to an immense and critical audience, and was a surprise, as we are disposed to think, even to those who expected most. A distinguished scholar was heard to say to a friend, as

the great assembly broke up, — almost unwillingly, — that it was itself an education to have witnessed the spectacle. That was the feeling certainly among the great body of the audience. They knew, for the first time, what the classical tragedy is; and entered, for the first time, into the temper and the enthusiasm of the people who, in its day, applauded it so eagerly."

From the special correspondent of the New York "Nation": —

"It was my good fortune last summer to witness the performance of the Agamemnon of Aeschylus in the hall of Balliol College, and it is natural that on this occasion my thoughts should go back to that scene, of which I endeavored at the time to give some slight account to the readers of the 'Nation.' A comparison of the two performances is evidently unfair. The Agamemnon and the Oedipus belong to different stages of art. The articulation of the Oedipus is complete in itself. The Agamemnon is one of a trilogy, and the choral masses demand a different disposition. It would have been impossible to handle them as Mr. Paine handles the choruses of the Oedipus, without

wearying the audience and dulling the edge of the action. Parts of them were sung, parts declaimed, now in unison, now by single *choreutai*, and a certain dramatic effect was thus attained, and a far closer unity of actors and chorus than was possible in the Harvard rendering of the Oedipus. The antique character was more seriously compromised, but the vitality was more tense. Nor would it be fair to compare the external conditions. The Oxford men had made no long and elaborate preparation. The stage appliances were simple in the extreme. Not half as many shillings were spent at Oxford as dollars at Harvard. A superb young undergraduate was busy stencilling a part of the palace roof of the Atreidae a couple of hours before the performance began. The costumes were not elaborate; there was no 'book of the opera,' no distinct effort to be scholarly or archaeological; and yet it was a marked success, — a success that repeated itself at Harrow, at Eton, in London. It is a beautiful thing to remember, with all its youthful dash and zest. Carefully planned, thoroughly studied, wrought out with minute attention to such details as fell within the limits, our Harvard Oedipus was by far the more

finished piece of work, and the memory of it is a more brilliant picture."

From the "New York Times": —

"The brilliant success of this attempt to put before an American audience a Greek tragedy in its original setting is a deserved reward for the unsparing labor and zeal of those who have taken part in the enterprise."

From the New York "Christian Union."

"The brilliant audiences, representative of the best American scholarship, which have gathered here, coming with mingled feelings of curiosity and scholarly interest to be amused and entertained by a representation of classic life, have been startled at first by the perfect and beautiful movement of the drama, and then irresistibly held in breathless attention upon the unfolding of a tragedy so full of human interest that, although spoken in a dead language, it is as contemporaneous as Hamlet or Faust."

From the "Springfield Republican": —

"The Harvard students made of the Oedipus Tyrannus to-night something more than a play for the closet and class-room. Their thoroughly dramatic interpretation of the tragedy gave it a living and human interest, and they had the sympathy and fixed attention of every person from first to last. The representation was a wonderfully accurate copy of Attic models. In the pronunciation of the language, costumes, stage scenery, and choral effects, it was doubtless the most faithful reproduction of a play in the Dionysiac Theatre, at Athens, 2300 years ago, that has ever been attempted in modern times."

From the Boston "Evening Transcript" of a later date: —

"The Greek play at Harvard is to be performed for the last time this evening. The premium on the price of the seats shows the eagerness to witness this rare, noble, and beautiful effort in art. It seems a pity that all is to be a memory only after this performance, and that so complete and worthy a presentation of the great Greek drama will never be seen again, by this generation, at least. Yet the public of

Boston, whose fame as an art centre is still further magnified to the world by the triumph at the Harvard theatre, will not be unreasonable or ungrateful. It has only thanks and honor for the generous youths and the accomplished men who have given so much wearing labor to the production that there is no one of them but says that, if it were to be done over again, no possible rewards would tempt him to engage in it."

VI.

THE Harvard Greek play is over; the labors of many months have been brought to a conclusion more successful than any one had hoped; there is everything to remember with pride, and little or nothing to regret. In looking back one recalls with pleasure the devotion of those who took charge, the enthusiasm of the performers, and the quick response of the public. An impulse has been given to classical studies, and already two Greek plays are announced from other colleges. There is no ground for fear that the event will be forgotten. To those who witnessed the play, it will remain a memorable incident; to those

who made the play, it will constitute one of the privileges of life.

There is, however, a feature of the play which is of more importance than all its pleasing memories. *Athenae omnium doctrinarum inventrices*, said the Roman orator; and among these the most prominent is a certain *doctrina vivendi*, which was the mother of all the excellences of that glorious age. In the play of Oedipus the King this doctrine is presented by a master's hand, and though the labor of production was so absorbing, and though the performance was so dazzling, yet the underlying moral significance did not go unheeded.

The Oedipus is a powerful exhibition of the fact that our lives "do ride upon a dial's point." Who could have foreseen the woes of Oedipus? As little can any man foresee his own. The sword is hanging, the shears of the weird sisters are moving across the web, the message is preparing, and no man

knows when or how it shall be delivered. But there is a deeper moral in the play than this universal truth. Each man bears the responsibility not only of his own deeds, but also of the deeds of a long line of ancestors. "God does not pay at the end of every day, my Lord Cardinal," was said to Richelieu by one of his victims, "but at the end God pays." Every sin brings suffering, but not to the doer alone. This is the great moral basis of life, and it is a fact which will be enforced by the new ethics as it never was by the old. Some one has wittily said that we may be the sons of our grandfathers; we certainly bear the consequences of their sins. Thebes weeps for the sins of her rulers. The suffering does not always fall upon the doer of the sin, but fall it does somewhere, and life would be a mockery if anything could be found to break the fall. There may be delay, there may be apparent miscarriage, but the sequence is inevitable.

"Sorrow tracketh wrong
As echo follows song,
On, on for ever."

To trace the working of the curse in the family of Laius is enough to cause a shudder of apprehension, for the experience of most men furnishes something similar at least in kind.

It is obviously just to the fathers that their sins should be visited upon their children, but it is equally clear that it is hard upon the children. The consequences of sin are as careless of their object as is the rain. Oedipus was essentially an innocent man. To do right is not sufficient to prevent suffering, if some one before us has done wrong. This is a fact painful to face, but out of the pain grows the lesson. The laws which work for the greatest happiness of the greatest number — if, indeed, there be such laws — are not considerate of the happiness of any individual. This is the truth in the doctrine

of fate: every sin committed will be expiated to the full by the innocent perhaps, by the guilty assuredly. The Greek recognition of this supreme fact is shown in the instant acceptance by Oedipus of the punishment of sins in which he had no part. He is a man, and he is willing to share the lot of humanity. It is this which redeems him from his passion in the murder of Laius and the injustice toward Creon; it is this which lifts him to a truly tragic place, and entitles him to the sympathies of mankind.

The performance of a Greek tragedy today has two aspects, — the one, that of a drama — δρᾶμα meaning a great action — exhibiting in unmistakable outlines the inflexibility of the moral law; the other, that of an undertaking with no significance beyond its interest. Since the circumstances of the present day are such as are likely to render the latter aspect the more common one, this

account of the Harvard Greek play may be closed with an appeal.

> "Be otherwise instructed, you!
> And preferably ponder, ere ye pass,
> Each incident of this strange human play."

Appendix I.

THE OEDIPUS TYRANNUS OF SOPHOCLES

will be performed in the original Greek at HARVARD UNIVERSITY, in the SANDERS THEATRE, on the evenings of May 17, 19, and 20. The part of Oedipus will be taken by MR. GEORGE RIDDLE, instructor in Elocution, and the other parts by students of the University. The music for the choruses has been composed for this performance by PROFESSOR J. K. PAINE; and the choral odes will be sung by a dramatic chorus of fifteen students, assisted by a supplementary chorus composed chiefly of graduates, with orchestral accompaniment.

Five hundred tickets for the first performance, at $3.00 each, and eight hundred for each of the other performances, at $2.00 each, will be offered to the public. Each ticket will entitle the holder to a reserved seat.

Of these tickets a number not exceeding 100 for the first evening and 200 for each of the succeeding evenings will be assigned by the committee to persons living in places distant from Cambridge. Applications for these may be made to MR. C. W. SEVER, University Bookstore, Cambridge, and must be received by him on or before March 25. These tickets will be assigned by lot, and adjacent seats (when desired) will be given to each applicant. If more tickets are asked for than can be assigned in this way, the committee will distribute those which are at their disposal to the applicants according to their judgment. All applicants will be informed immediately by mail of the number of tickets assigned them; and payment for the tickets will be deferred until such notice is received.

The regular sale of tickets will begin at the University Bookstore in Cambridge, and at 146 Tremont Street in Boston, on Monday, April 4, at 10 A.M.

The text of the Oedipus Tyrannus, in Greek and English, will be for sale at both places at which tickets are sold; and will be sent by mail to any address. Price, 50 cents; by mail, 60 cents.

The music of the choruses, composed by PROFESSOR

PAINE, with Greek and English words and piano accompaniment, will be published March 30 by MR. ARTHUR P. SCHMIDT, 146 Tremont Street, Boston, who will send it by mail on receipt of the price, $1.25.

W. W. GOODWIN,
J. W. WHITE,
J. K. PAINE,
} *Committee of Arrangements.*

HARVARD UNIVERSITY,
March 16, 1881.

Appendix 2.

ΠΑΣΙ ΤΟΙΣ ΘΕΩΜΕΝΟΙΣ ΧΑΙΡΕΙΝ

χαίρετ' ἀστικὸς λεὼς,
ἵκταρ ἥμενοι Διὸς,
παρθένου φίλας φίλοι,
σωφρονοῦντες ἐν χρόνῳ.
Παλλάδος δ' ὑπὸ πτεροῖς
ὄντας ἅζεται πατήρ.

ΣΟΦΟΚΛΕΟΥΣ

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΥΣ ΤΥΡΑΝΝΟΣ

ΔΙΔΑΧΘΗΣΕΤΑΙ ΕΝ ΘΕΑΤΡΩΙ ΤΩΙ ΤΟΥ 'ΑΡΒΑΡΔΙΟΥ ΔΙΔΑΣΚΑΔΕΙΟΥ

τῇ ἑβδόμῃ ἐπὶ δέκα τοῦ Θαργηλιῶνος μηνὸς, ἔτει ,ΑΩΠΑ, καὶ αὖθις τῇ ἑνάτῃ ἐπὶ δέκα καὶ τῇ εἰκάδι καὶ τῇ δεκάτῃ φθίνοντος, καὶ τελευταῖον τῇ τετράδι φθίνοντος.

ΤΑ ΤΟΥ ΔΡΑΜΑΤΟΣ ΠΡΟΣΩΠΑ.

Οἰδίπους, Θηβαίων βασιλεύς	GEORGE RIDDLE.
Ἱερεὺς Διός	WILLIAM HOBBS MANNING.
Κρέων, ἀδελφὸς Ἰοκάστης	HENRY NORMAN.
Τειρεσίας, μάντις τυφλός	CURTIS GUILD.
Ἰοκάστη, Θηβαίων βασίλεια	LEONARD ECKSTEIN OPDYCKE.
Ἄγγελος Κορίνθιος	ARTHUR WELLINGTON ROBERTS.
Θεράπων Λαΐου	GARDINER MARTIN LANE.
Ἐξάγγελος	OWEN WISTER.

ΚΩΦΑ ΠΡΟΣΩΠΑ.

Ἀκόλουθοι Οἰδίποδος	J. R. COOLIDGE, E. J. WENDELL.
Ἀκόλουθοι Ἰοκάστης	J. J. GREENOUGH, W. L. PUTNAM.
Ἀκόλουθοι Κρέοντος	G. P. KEITH, J. LEE.
Παῖς Τειρεσίαν εἰσάγων	C. H. GOODWIN.
Ἀντιγόνη	E. MANNING.
Ἰσμήνη	J. K. WHITTEMORE.

Ἱκέται.—G. P. KEITH, G. D. MARKHAM (*ἱερῆς*). W. H. HERRICK, J. LEE, E. LOVERING, H. PUTNAM, L. A. SHAW, C. M. WALSH (*ἤθεοι λεκτοί*). C. H. GOODWIN, E. MANNING, R. MANNING, W. MERRILL, E. R. THAYER, J. K. WHITTEMORE (*παῖδες*).

ΧΟΡΟΣ ΓΕΡΟΝΤΩΝ ΘΗΒΑΙΩΝ.

Κορυφαῖος . . . . . LOUIS BUTLER MCCAGG.

Συγχορευτὴς ἐν τῷ τρίτῳ στασίμῳ μονῳδῶν . GEORGE LAURIE OSGOOD.

Χορευταί —

N. M. BRIGHAM, MARSHALL H. CUSHING, CHARLES S. HAMLIN,
FREDERICK R. BURTON, WENDELL P. DAVIS, JARED S. HOW,
HENRY G. CHAPIN, MORRIS EARLE, HOWARD LILIENTHAL,
SUMNER COOLIDGE, PERCIVAL J. EATON, CHARLES F. MASON,
EDWARD P. MASON, GUSTAVUS TUCKERMAN.

Χοροδιδάσκαλος ὁ τὰς αὐλῳδίας ποιήσας . JOHN KNOWLES PAINE.

Ὑποβολεύς . . . GEORGE L. KITTREDGE.

Ἡ μὲν σκηνὴ τοῦ δράματος πρὸ τῶν βασιλείων ἐν Θήβαις ταῖς Βοιωτικαῖς ὑπόκειται. Ὁ δὲ χορὸς συνέστηκεν ἐκ Θηβαίων γερόντων. Προλογίζει δ' Οἰδίπους.

Ἀξιοῦσιν οἱ ἐπιμεληταὶ πάντας τοὺς θεωροῦντας διαμένειν καθημένους ἕως ἂν τελευτηθῶσιν οἱ ἐξόδιοι νόμοι. Εὐθὺς δ' ᾀσθέντος τοῦ τετάρτου στασίμου (ἰὼ γενεαὶ βροτῶν, κ. τ. ἑ.) ἀνάπαυσις γενήσεται τοῖς ἐξιέναι βουλομένοις. Μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα αἱ θύραι κεκλείσονται.

Μετὰ τὴν θέαν ἅμαξαι ἱπποσιδηροδρομικαὶ ἑτοῖμαι ἔσονται τοῖς ἐς ἄστυ πορεύεσθαι μέλλουσιν.

Μετεφράσθη ἔνια χάριν τῶν μὴ ἑλληνιζόντων —

The spectators are urgently requested to remain seated until the end of the orchestral postlude. A short pause will be made after the last choral song (ἰὼ γενεαὶ βροτῶν, *O tribes of living men*, etc.) for the convenience of those who wish to leave the theatre, and the doors will then remain closed until the end of the performance.

Horse-cars will be ready after the performance for those who wish to go to Boston.

Οὐιλσῶνες τύποις ἔγραψαν.

Appendix 3.

A PARTIAL BIBLIOGRAPHY OF THE HARVARD GREEK PLAY.

[The names of the writers are given when known. An asterisk indicates that the date is given approximately.]

Accounts previous to the performances: —

Boston Sunday Herald. By H. Norman . .	Mar. 27
New York Herald. By H. Norman . .	Apr. 1
" " Evening Post . . .	" 16
Boston Daily Advertiser	May 2
Boston Daily Advertiser. An account of the music by G. A. Burdett	" 5
Boston Daily Advertiser	" 11
Chicago Tribune*	" 14
The Harvard Register. By Prof. J. W. White	May
Boston Journal	May 17
" Post	"
" Traveller	"
Philadelphia Telegraph	"
Brooklyn Times	"
The Nation. By Prof. B. L. Gildersleeve of Johns Hopkins University	"

Reports of the Rehearsal: —

New York Sun	May 15
Boston Daily Advertiser	May 16
" Transcript	"
" Herald	"
" Globe	"
New York Tribune	"
" " Evening Post	"

Reports of the Performance: —

Boston Daily Advertiser	May 18
" " Herald	"
" " Journal	"
" " Post	"
" " Globe	"
" " Transcript	"
" " Traveller	"
New York Sun	"
" " Times	"
" " World. By F. Marion Crawford	"
" " Herald	"
" " Courier (criticism of the music)	"
Chicago Tribune	"
Baltimore Sun	"
Harvard Lampoon†	"
New Haven Union	"
Philadelphia Bulletin	"
Pittsburg Dispatch	May 19
Springfield Republican*	"

† With this exception the Harvard papers are not mentioned, as references to the play were contained in almost every issue during April and May. See the Echo, Crimson, Advocate, and Lampoon.

Worcester Spy . . . . . May 19
New York Star . . . . . "
Philadelphia News* . . . . . "
New Haven Palladium* . . . . . "
Providence Journal* . . . . . "
Wilmington (Del.) Every Evening* . May 21
Literary World . . . . . "
The New York Critic. By Mrs. Julia Ward Howe . . . . . "
New York Independent. By Rev. Kinsley Twining . . . . . May 22
Providence Press* . . . . . "
Hartford Courant . . . . . May 23
Brooklyn Eagle.* By Rev. J. W. Chadwick . " 24
New York Christian Union. By H. W. Mabie . May 25
Boston Congregationalist . . . . . "
The Nation. By Prof. B. L. Gildersleeve of Johns Hopkins University . . . . . May 26
Harper's Weekly, with six illustrations. By Prof. Louis Dyer . . . . . May 28

Incidental discussions of the play: —
Boston Advertiser . . . . . May 18 and 19
" Transcript . . . . . May 20
" " . . . . . " 21
Literary World . . . . . June 4

The Atlantic Monthly. By Prof. C. E. Norton . July, 1881
The Century Magazine. An account of the costumes, by F. D. Millet . . . . . November, 1881